

MOBILE

Michael Kors taps Instagram contest for limited-edition watch push

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By TRICIA CARR

U.S. label Michael Kors is hosting a mobile contest on the Instagram application during which users can flaunt their favorite brand watch for the chance to win a limited-edition timepiece.

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Instagram users can upload an image with hashtag #MKTimeless for the chance to win one of three numbered New York Limited Edition Runway Watch timepieces. Michael Kors could potentially get a lot of mobile traction in this effort, but should monitor submissions and highlight those that match the existing brand image.

"Our approach to the campaign is holistic, the goal being to construct a digital ecosystem that is always at work," said Lisa Pomerantz, senior vice president of global communications at **Michael Kors**, New York.

"The functionality of [Instagram] is also completely in line with our needs for this campaign – Instagram is visual, creative, convenient and viral," she said. "Because the ultimate goal of the campaign was to put our consumers' style center stage via personal photos, it was the natural choice.

"In today's society, social media activity is not unique to a young demographic, and brand

loyalists of all ages are exploring the social space, connecting with one another, sharing content and interacting with the brands they love."

Watch out

Michael Kors is using its social channels and Destination Kors lifestyle site to tell consumers how to enter the contest.

On the blog, the label posted, "Send us a photo of your favorite way to rock your watch — on its own or loaded up with bracelets — and you could win one of our New York Limited Edition Runway Watches."



Limited-edition watch

The label is releasing 2,000 of this particular watch. Each one is engraved with an edition number.

The timepiece features a diamond at the 12 o'clock mark and a graphic etching of the New York skyline on the back of the face.

The Instagram contest began Aug. 15 and ends Aug. 27. Users must show a Michael Kors watch in their Instagram photo to be eligible to win.

The label is hosting the contest on Instagram due to the popularity of the brand's account. In fact, it has seen 50 percent growth on its Instagram account in the past two weeks, per Michael Kors.

Furthermore, the first contest-related posts received more than 17,000 Facebook 'likes' and 18,500 Instagram 'likes.'

There were 3,000 fan entries in the first 24 hours of the contest and more than 5,000 entries within 72 hours.

The label also posted on Facebook that users could share images via Twitter with the #MKTimeless hashtag.

At the end of the contest, Micheal Kors will share contest images on the Destination Kors site.

In February, Michael Kors used the Instagram app as a major component of its St. Valentine's Day campaign that spanned mobile, ecommerce, digital and social media ([see story](#)).

"The contest as it is designed makes a lot of sense for many reasons," said Jeff Hasen, chief marketing officer of [Hipcricket](#), Kirkland, WA. "Instagram provides easy personalization and sharing.

"Those who enter this contest will want to show off their creativity," he said. "For Michael Kors, it is a buzz generator, especially through the wise use of social networks.

"This should boost the Michael Kors brand because of the coolness factor and the exclusivity with such few watches available."

Mr. Hasen is not affiliated with Michael Kors, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Photogenic consumers

Instagram is available for the iPhone, iPad and Android devices. It seems to reach a wide demographic, but skews towards younger smartphone users.

Michael Kors can potentially reach a large audience with its timepiece effort, but will likely keep up an exclusive brand image because the watch is in limited production.

However, the wider the reach of a contest platform, the more carefully a luxury marketer should be monitoring entries.

Michael Kors may want to limit the contest images that it posts on its Destination Kors site to those that align with the brand image.

In the past few months alone, marketers TAG Heuer, Giorgio Armani, Hugo Boss, Rebecca Minkoff, Swarovski and Porsche have used the Instagram mobile app in their efforts.

For example, Italian brand Armani bolstered its social media presence through an Instagram effort in which consumers could upload images of them wearing their favorite sunglasses for the brand's "Frames of Your Holiday" campaign ([see story](#)).

In addition, Rebecca Minkoff enlisted 14 well-known bloggers to introduce the new spring/summer 2013 collection through a contest that spanned Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Stylecaster, SocialCam and the Minkette blog.

In fact, the brand has seen tremendous success with social media. Rebecca Minkoff's usage of "shoetography" on Instagram helped propel sales 100 percent in the spring of this year ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, precision-cut crystal maker Swarovski targeted a younger demographic through a Web series starring "Gossip Girl" stylist Eric Daman.

The brand hosted the "Dress as your favorite Gossip Girl" contest that involved users

uploading pictures of themselves to Twitter or Instagram in outfits inspired by Gossip Girl characters with hashtag #SwarovskiStyle ([see story](#)).

Instagram is used often in the luxury sector, but brands should not be concerned yet about overusing the platform.

“I do not think Instagram is overused but we certainly run that risk if this becomes common rather than a noteworthy exception,” Mr. Hasen said.

Final Take

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